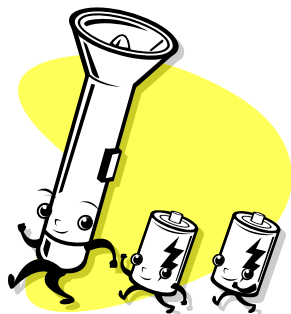




# FACT SHEET

## Household batteries



There are two types of batteries used by the average household. Wet-cell batteries are used in vehicles and boats. Dry-cell batteries are used in flashlights, toys, hearing aids, watches and other household items.

Wet and dry refers to the form of chemical electrolyte – liquid in wet cells and in solid material or gel in dry cells. Both types contain heavy metals – such as mercury, lead, cadmium and nickel – that react with electrolyte to produce power. For more information on how batteries work, go to HowStuffWorks - <http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/battery.htm>

Proper disposal of batteries is important because heavy metals can endanger human health and the environment.

### Wet-cell batteries

Car batteries contain lead and sulfuric acid that can burn the skin. Dispose of lead acid batteries by taking them to the wholesaler or retailer when you buy a new battery. Don't pour battery acid on the ground or in a drain. Store batteries upright in a secure, covered location outside your home. Avoid long-term storage and check often for leaks. Neutralize a spill with baking soda and rinse the area clean with water.

### Dry-cell batteries

Americans buy near 3 billion dry-cell batteries a year, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Households are exempt from the federal Universal Waste Rule (information on the division's fact sheet page - <http://www.waste.ky.gov/factsheets/> ) and can dispose of dry-cell batteries with their garbage. Businesses are subject to the rule.

There are three types of dry-cell batteries:

- **Single-use, disposable batteries** – Alkaline and zinc-carbon batteries commonly used in flashlights, toys and games, remote controls and appliances. *Recycling potential:* As Kentucky's recycling infrastructure matures, single-use batteries may become a part of local recycling programs. However, the only recycling options now are companies that sell collection boxes that can be filled and mailed back.
- **Button-cell batteries** – Small, disc-shaped batteries found in watches and hearing aids. *Recycling potential:* Button cells are increasingly targeted for recycling because of the value of recoverable materials, the battery's small size and relatively easy handling. Some stores will accept button-cell batteries.
- **Rechargeable batteries** – Batteries that can be restored to full charge by application of electrical energy. Each rechargeable battery can substitute for hundreds of single-use batteries. *Recycling potential:* The nonprofit Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corp. will recycle cell phones and rechargeable batteries. Go to <http://www.rbric.org/>, click on Recycle Now and enter your ZIP code for a list of collection points in your area.

### For more information

Your county solid waste coordinator and garbage service provider are good sources of information about recycling and disposal options in your area. A list of coordinators is online at <http://www.waste.ky.gov/branches/rla/County+Solid+Waste+Coordinators.htm>

Sites online with more information include:

<http://recy-cal.stores.yahoo.net/bare.html?gclid=CMLj-N-NhJcCFZ2V7QodUTaUXg>  
<http://www.batteryrecycling.com/>  
<http://earth911.com/hazardous/single-use-batteries/>  
<https://www.thinkgreenfromhome.com/Products.cfm>

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